Steps to Increase Production and Export of Tea

4451. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) Whether it is fact that India is the largest producer of tea in the world producting 870 million Kgs.Against China's 625 million Kgs.;

(b) whether it is also a fact that India exports only 25 per cent of its production *vis-a-vis* China, Kenya and Sri Lanka which exports 35, 89 and 95 per cent of their production, respectively;

(c) if so, the reason therefor; and

(d) what steps are being taken by Government to step up tea production and increase exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Export of tea by India is lower as compared to China, Kenya and Sri Lanka because bulk of the tea produced is consumed within the country.

(d) Several steps have been taken by the Government/Tea Board for increasing production of tea. The steps imclude financial assistance by Tea Board to the tea industry through its various development schemes for encouraging extension planting, replainting, rejuvenation, pruning, infilling, creation of irrigation facilities and drainage etc.

With the view to optimise export of tea, Government and the Tea board have been analying country-wise exports of tea giving special attention to areas offering potential. Tea Board also acts to remove bottlenecks in exports to individual markets whenever these are noticed. Certain other steps taken to increase exports of tea include;

(i) participation in major trade fairs/exhibitions abroad.

(ii) field sampling at speciality stores and in principal markets.

(iii) media campaign to increase consumer awareness of the speciality of Indian teas and to popularise the Tea Board marketing symbol which stands for pure Indian Tea.

(iv) exchange of tea deligations between India and tea importing countries.